

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Previously Presented) A server computer comprising:

means arranged to store at least one computer file;

means arranged to store at least one digital signature;

each computer file having an associated digital signature created using a signing key;

means arranged to receive a request from at least one other computer for access to at least one computer file stored on said server computer;

means arranged to retrieve said at least one requested computer file;

means arranged to retrieve the digital signature or signatures associated with said at least one requested computer file;

means arranged to validate the digital signature or signatures associated with said at least one requested computer file; and

means arranged to deny said other computer access to said at least one requested computer file if the digital signature or signatures associated with each respective requested computer file is invalid.

2. (Previously Presented) A server computer as in claim 1 further comprising:

means arranged to store a list of approved computer file signing parties;

each computer file signing party having at least one associated signing key with which to create digital signatures; and in which

said means arranged to validate the digital signature associated each requested computer file invalidates said digital signature if said digital signature was created with a signing key not associated with an approved computer file signing party.

3. (Previously Presented) A server computer as in claim 1 further comprising a clock, wherein each computer file stored on said server computer has an associated expiry date; such that:

said means arranged to validate the digital signature or signatures associated with said at least one requested computer file invalidates said digital signature if the current clock date is later than the expiry date associated with that computer file.

4. (Previously Presented) A server computer arranged to store at least one file, at least one digital signature, each computer file having an associated digital signature created using a signing key, said server computer being arranged to perform the operation of:

receiving a connection from another computer;

receiving a request from said other computer for access to at least one computer file stored on said server computer;

retrieving said at least one requested computer file;

retrieving the digital signature or signatures associated with said at least one requested computer file;

validating the digital signature or signatures associated with said at least one requested computer file; and

denying said other computer access to said at least one requested computer file if the digital signature or signatures associated with said at least one requested computer file is invalid.

5. (Previously Presented) A method of operating a server computer comprising:

receiving a request from at least one other computer for access to at least one computer file stored on said server computer; each said computer file having an associated unique digital signature created using a signing key, said signature being stored on said server computer;

retrieving said at least one requested computer file;

retrieving the digital signature or signatures associated with said at least one requested computer file; and

validating the unique digital signature or signatures associated with said at least one requested computer file; and

providing said other computer with access to said at least one requested computer file only if the digital signature or signatures associated with said at least one requested computer file is valid.

6. (Previously Presented) A computer program storage medium, said medium embodying computer readable code for loading into a computer and executable by said computer to perform the method of claim 5.

7. (Previously Presented) A method of operating a computer system comprising at least one server computer, client computers and a network interconnecting them, said method comprising:

storing files at a server computer, said files being associated with at least one respectively corresponding digital signature;

receiving at said server computer a request from a client computer for a file stored at the server computer;

in response to said received request, checking the validity at said server computer of the at least one digital signature corresponding to the requested file; and

sending the requested file to the requesting client computer only if its associated at least one digital signature is found to be valid.

8. (Previously Presented) A method as in claim 7 wherein at least one digital signature associated at the server computer with a stored file has been created from the file by the server computer using a signing key.

9. (Previously Presented) A method for operating a server computer, said method comprising:

storing files at the server computer in association with at least one respectively corresponding digital signature;

receiving at said server computer a request from another computer for at least one of said stored files;

sending the at least one requested file to said another computer only if the at least one digital signature associated with the requested file is valid.

10. (Previously Presented) A method as in claim 9 wherein at least one digital signature associated with a stored file has been created therefrom by the server computer using a signing key.

11. (New) A server computer as in claim 1 wherein the received request includes a pathname for the requested file.

12. (New) A server computer as in claim 4 wherein the received request includes a pathname for the requested file.

13. (New) A method as in claim 5 wherein the received request includes a pathname for the requested file.

14. (New) A method as in claim 7 wherein the received request includes a pathname for the requested file.

15. (New) A method as in claim 9 wherein the received request includes a pathname for the requested file.